

I would like to voice my opposition to further relaxation of media ownership by the FCC. Since the 1996 Telecommunications Act, consolidation--not competition--has been the rule, severely contracting the ownership of American media with less than ten corporations. The health of our republic hinges on the diversity of the media and further consolidation, in which only a few companies can control all the content and distribution of media content is not amenable to this most important role. The FCC must tighten its regulations to make sure that the public is served by a competing media environment. The media is the only industry specifically protected by the U.S. Constitution and therefore it has a responsibility to behave in accord with its role as a government watchdog. The airwaves of this country are the property of the public and the FCC must prevent and break up monopolies in the telecom industry. Prices have risen 2 to 3 times the rate of inflation since 1996; clearly the promise of lower rates for consumers has not been realized by the wave of media consolidation. I urge the FCC to carefully consider its role in protecting our democracy and our airwaves.